

Thirteen Years After

For very young Americans the tragedy cannot loom large in memory. For others it must still seem only yesterday that the word came of the assassination of John F. Kennedy — just thirteen years ago today.

Those who endured the shock of that event may have mingled emotions about the news that a House Select Committee has opened simultaneous new investigations into Kennedy's death and the killing five years later of the Rev. Martin Luther King.

Despite all the speculation and suspicion that many postmortems into these murders (and that of the late Robert Kennedy) and stirred, there is

no assurance that the newly begun inquiries will produce any conclusive new evidence. For the families of the victims there may be only additional agony as the cases are reexamined.

Nevertheless, the effort is warranted. Much of the country's unease stems from successive, shattering disclosures about the dubious operations of the CIA and FBI in many realms.

But as their credibility on many matters has been steadily undermined, the case for a diligent reappraisal of the Kennedy-King slayings has grown more compelling. For much of what was accepted as the last word was based on material furnished by those agencies.

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We do not know where a retracing of the ground will lead—if anywhere. But it is a worthy endeavor, headed by a man—Richard A. Sprague—whose investigative experience merits the confidence of the country. It is never too late to find out whether we know the truth, and the whole truth.

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